

Czech Republic's rising prosperity often inaccessible to disabled people

Between World Wars I and II, the small country in the heart of Europe known today as the Czech Republic became the fifth most industrialized country in the world. But in the postwar years when the country fell under Communist rule, the country lost its enviable economic standing.

Today, as a democracy, the Czech Republic is regaining its power in the European market. But for the country's citizens who have disabilities, and whose incomes are among the lowest in the country, there is little opportunity to take advantage of the newfound freedom others enjoy.

A Gallaudet audience learned about the state of affairs for deaf people and other people with disabilities in the Czech Republic today—and when the country was part of the former Czechoslovakia—on Dec. 7 from Dr. Jaroslav Hruby, a visiting Fulbright scholar at Gallaudet through February. With Hruby are his wife and their deaf teenage daughter.

Hruby is the executive director of the Czech Government Board for People with Disabilities and is renowned for his work in the field of assistive devices for deaf and hard of hearing people and for advocating for their rights. At Gallaudet, he is working through the Gallaudet Research Institute, which sponsored his presentation.

The Czech Republic, which is about the size of South Carolina, has a population of about 10 million people. Hruby said that the country is extremely successful in moving from communism to a free market economy. The country has paid most of its debts abroad, and its overall unemployment rate is only 3.1 percent, he said.

But for people with disabilities, the unemployment rate leaps to about 25 percent. For example, as hearing people, who are generally better educated, prosper, most deaf people work in low-paying jobs or are unemployed and living on state disability payments, Hruby said.

While the Czech Republic has no law similar to the Americans with Disabilities Act, it does offer employers incentives to hire people with disabilities. For example, businesses get a refund of the 35 percent of an employee's salary that employers must pay to the government for each employee's medical and social security insurance, and they pay lower income taxes. Agencies that set up sheltered employment for people with severe disabilities can get government grants equaling about \$8,000 in U.S. currency.

In addition, people with disabilities pay only a 5 percent value-added tax

for technical aids such as batteries for hearing aids, rather than the 23 percent tax on all other personal items.

Assistive devices such as hearing aids, ear molds, and flashing doorbells are covered by medical insurance. The Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs pays half the cost on text telephones, amplified handsets, vibrating or flashing alarm clocks, and induction loops and amplifiers and 25 percent of teletext decoders, which are similar to U.S. TV closed-captioned decoders.

The Czech Republic has a very extensive system of special schools, including 19 schools for deaf and hard of hearing students. Most of the schools are oral, but Hruby said that because the Czech language is 100 percent phonetic, it is a bit easier to speechread Czech than English.

Under communism, a negative image of people with disabilities grew more prevalent, Hruby said. "Even a child with two fingers missing was put in a special school so as not to disturb the 'normal' children," he said.

Recently, deaf people in the Czech Republic convinced the Ministry of Education to require that all teachers of deaf students know sign language, in spite of great opposition from the mostly hearing teachers. Still, teachers are not required to use sign language for all deaf students, Hruby said. And although a 1990 Czech law affirms the right of deaf children to be educated in sign language, "it is not in practice," he said.

If one looks at profoundly, prelingually deafened people (without any residual hearing) and does not include hard of hearing people, Hruby estimates there are no deaf people in the country with graduate university degrees. But if a 70 dB hearing loss is considered deaf, as Gallaudet defines it, and if people who became deaf after learning a spoken language are also counted, the number may be about 100.

The Janacek Academy of Music and Arts in Brno recently enrolled 20 students in its new theater and education program for deaf people. The director of the program was at Gallaudet for Hruby's presentation, as were several other of his associates from the Czech Republic. "But what is our terrible problem?" Hruby said. "We have a shortage of interpreters."

Hruby invited everyone to visit the Czech Republic and extended a special invitation for people to come to Prague July 18-24 for its Fifth Annual Meeting of Families with Deaf Children, which follows the International Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf to be held July 6-15 in Austria.



Steve Ryan and Jean Gordon, sign language trainers in the Department of Sign Communication and officers in the Nation's Capital Chapter of the American Sign Language Teachers Association, read a story to KDES preschoolers from My ABC Book of Animal Signs, which was purchased with money donated to the school by ASLTA. A number of other schools and organizations serving deaf people benefited from the donation project, which was coordinated by KDES preschool teacher and ASLTA member Janet Weinstock (right).

VIP is focus of senate meeting

The University Faculty Senate closed the fall semester with a Dec. 19 meeting that included a discussion of an upcoming external review of the Vision Implementation Plan (VIP) process.

The final recommendations of the VIP were distributed Dec. 22 to the Academic Affairs Management Team, faculty officers, legislative council chairs, deans, and to the libraries of both campuses. The Board of Trustees will vote on the recommendations at its February meeting. Vice President for Academic Affairs Roslyn Rosen invited faculty members to send her their input on the VIP final recommendations by Jan. 20. She also will discuss the recommendations at a special senate meeting Jan. 18.

Director of Institutional Research Kurt Schneidmiller has worked with University Faculty Senate Chair Bill Marshall and Dr. Rosen to find an external evaluator to review the VIP process, as requested by the senate Nov. 21. The reviewer will read the VIP Steering Committee's Dec. 22 final report, other VIP materials, and the Nov. 21 and Jan. 18, 1995, reports about the VIP recommendations from the councils on preparatory studies and undergraduate and graduate education (CPS, CUE, CGE). The evaluator will spend about three days at Gallaudet, preferably the week of Jan. 18-24, and give the final report to Rosen by Jan. 26. Dr. Marshall and a few senate members at the Dec. 19 meeting requested that the reviewer give an oral report to the senate, but Marshall added that he was told that

the cost may prohibit this.

The evaluator will interview Rosen, President I. King Jordan, faculty officers, Committee A (Faculty Welfare) Chair Ed Krest, CPS Chair Andy Brinks, CUE Chair Ron Sutcliffe, and CGE Chair Jim Mahshie. The reviewer also will interview five faculty members

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What to do when it snows

Snow looks pretty on a postcard, but not when you have to sludge through it on your way to work or to class.

When the flakes begin to fall, Gallaudet President I. King Jordan will determine whether conditions will warrant having the University and the Model Secondary School for the Deaf remain open, open late, close early, or close for the day. Faculty, staff, and students at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School will follow decisions made for the Prince George's County, Md., public school system.

Any alterations to daily class and work schedules will be promptly announced by local television and radio stations. Employees and students may also call Gallaudet's inclement weather hotline for a recorded message at (202) 651-5656 (TTY) or (202) 651-5000 (V/TTY). Since these lines receive heavy use during a winter storm warning, Dr. Jordan encourages callers to be patient and keep calling if they get a busy signal.

Faculty Senate meets Dec. 19

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chosen by Marshall: Dr. Donna Mertens, Dr. Janet Pray, Dr. Kay Meadow-Orlans, Dr. Barbara Bodner-Johnson, and Dr. Dennis Galvan. In addition, the evaluator will review the data and procedures used in the VIP process and recommendations in terms of justifiability based on data, costs, enrollment, and needs.

Regarding the VIP and its final recommendations, Rosen thanked everyone, particularly faculty officers, for their help throughout the past year. "We do not know how the board will react to our recommendations, and we cannot second-guess the Board of Trustees," she said.

However, Rosen said she has made plans, with faculty input, as to how to proceed with the VIP recommendations that the board approves. For example, faculty members who are up for tenure this year and whose departments merge due to VIP actions will be evaluated following *Faculty Guidelines* by their former department chairs. The chairs will make tenure recommendations to their deans, who will take them to Rosen, as in the past.

Rosen also said that because Gallaudet expects to have the same number of students next fall as it does now, that it will need the same number of faculty, especially in mathematics and English. In addition, she said, new course offerings such as a proposed 12-hour intensive English course and a freshman seminar may mean that the University will need more faculty. She added that she expects the board to support the closing of the School of Preparatory Studies and that, if it does, Gallaudet will need to develop a support system for new students on Kendall Green.

The University has very clear legal responsibilities to its faculty, said Rosen, and it wants to be sure everyone is treated appropriately. She said that she is closing all off-campus searches for faculty; reassignment for displaced faculty will be a first priority. Rosen said that she plans for everyone to have one year's notice if their current positions will be discontinued, and she hopes to begin announcing VIP-related staffing changes

in January and February.

In other news, the senate approved the final draft of general procedures for the Ad Hoc Appeal Committee on Faculty Displacement and Reassignment. Faculty may still appeal to Committee D (Nominations/Elections/Grievances) if they are dissatisfied with the ad hoc committee's ruling.

Announcements

Academic Computing will hold two short courses this month: "How to Use E-Mail," Jan. 18, 9-11 a.m., and Jan. 26, 3-4:30 p.m.; and "Internet, Bitnet, Send/Receive," Jan. 24, 3-4:30 p.m., and Jan. 30, 9-11 a.m. Both courses will be held in Merrill Learning Center, Room LE-60. To register or for more information, E-mail SCWALDEN, call x5273, or visit the office, HMB W121.

Several areas in the Office of Enrollment Services have relocated. The new locations and hours of business are: Admissions, Ely Center, Room 113, 8:30 a.m.-noon and 1-4:30 p.m.; Enrollment Management, Ely Center, Room 102, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; Financial Aid, Ely Center, Room 103, 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4:30 p.m.; Recruitment, Ely Center, Room 116, 8 a.m.-noon and 1-4:30 p.m.; and Records Management, HMB, Room S136, 8:30 a.m.-noon and 1-4:30 p.m.

New Staff Advisory Council members for 1995-96 are Carlene Thumann-Prezioso, research associate, Culture and Communication Studies; Mary Lott, residence education coordinator, Student Life, Northwest Campus; Carol McLaughlin, data base management coordinator, Enrollment Services; Dr. Mike Deninger, senior research scientist, Graduate Studies and Research; and Debbie Barron, intake coordinator, Career Center. Completing two-year terms are Della Butler, counselor, Counseling and Development Center, Northwest Campus; Elaine Vance, manager of benefits, compensation, and records, Human Resources; and Barbara Hunt, teacher aide, Special Opportunities Program, KDES. Outgoing members are Rosa Mann, specialist, Admissions; Paul Blakely, administrative secretary, Student Development; Vanessa Slade-Bratcher, program assistant, University Center; and Diana Gates, computer learning specialist, Learning Resource Center, Northwest Campus. The SAC will hold its first meeting of the year on Jan. 18.



James Akridge, coordinator of Residence Education at MSSD, recognizes Rosemary Adamca-Balzer, Residence Education assistant, for 10 years of service.

Among Ourselves

Communication Arts Department assistant professors Dr. Robert Harrison, Dr. Raed Mohsen, and Dr. Jamey Piland, and associate professor Dr. Paul Siegel, presented papers at the Speech Communication Association Annual Convention held Nov. 19-22 in New Orleans, La. Harrison presented "Deaf Child-Hearing Parent and the Family Decision Making Process" and participated in a panel discussion, "Persuade and Punish: Helping Police Officers to Provide Winning Testimony." Mohsen presented "Who Is Closer to Mom and Dad: Gender Differences Among Deaf Adolescents" and served as chair of the panel discussion "Family Relationships: Gender, Metaphors, and Decision Making Issues." Piland presented "Ethnographies of Community Documenting Everyday Life," and Siegel presented "Teaching Free Speech in the Court's Backyard."

Rosa Mann, admissions specialist in the Admissions Office, and Carol McLaughlin, data base management coordinator in the Enrollment Services Office, were presenters at the Annual

Regional Conference of the Middle States Association of Collegiate Registrars and Officers of Admission, held Nov. 29 in Atlantic City, N.J. They presented a workshop, "Giants, Wizards, and Dwarfs," an exercise to help promote institutional values and expectations related to living and learning in a multicultural community. In addition, Mann accepted a two-year appointment as chair of the Facilities and Evaluation Committee on the organization's Executive Committee.

Charles Reilly, a research scientist in the Culture and Communications Studies Program, led a session entitled "The Boarding School Experience," at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association Nov. 30-Dec. 4 in Atlanta, Ga. The session provided perspectives of deaf, Native American, and Russian orphan children on being institutionalized and how they respond through strategies of resistance and cooperation and by creating a peer culture. Reilly intends to further his studies to include residential school experiences for these groups.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are printed for Gallaudet faculty and staff. Written ads must be submitted in person or by mail to *On the Green*, MSSD, Room G-37. Off-campus phone numbers must include an area code and whether the number is voice or TTY. In compliance with the Education of the Deaf Act of 1992, as amended, payment of \$1 per ad per printing must accompany each ad. Ads received Jan. 9-13 will be printed Jan. 23.

FOR RENT: Female wanted to share 2-BR, 1 1/2-BA condo w/balcony near Montgomery Mall, Bethesda, Md.; close to Metro, NIH, Naval Hospital; no pets; \$500/mo. incl. util., avail. Jan. 15. Call (301) 469-5852 (TTY) eves. and weekends.

FOR RENT: Nonsmoker wanted to rent BR in Silver Spring, Md. house, \$450/mo. incl. util. and cable TV, must have own trans., no pets, avail. now. Call (301) 384-8766 (V/TTY) or E-mail MMMORALES.

FOR SALE: '84 Oldsmobile Regency 98, 108K, good cond., as is, \$2,000. Call D.M. Logan, (301) 559-5428 (V).

FOR RENT: Unfurnished lower floor of house in White Oak area of Silver Spring, Md., large living room, BR, kitchen privileges, near public trans. but must have own trans., \$400/mo. incl. util. Call (301) 431-4131 (V) or E-mail TBHANSON.

FOR RENT: 1-BR remodeled Capitol Hill apt. in townhouse at 11th and G Sts. NE, AC, W/D, separate entrance, secure foyer, walk-in closet, yearly lease, \$500 plus util. Call (202) 543-8070 (V) eves. or leave message.

FOR RENT: Master BR and private BA, kitchen privileges, parking, Lanham, Md., \$350/mo. plus 1/2 util. Also need babysitter for low fee. Call x5754 or (301) 552-2132 (V/TTY).

FOR RENT: 1-BR apt. on Montello Ave. NE, walk to Gallaudet, avail. now, \$400/mo. plus util. Call (301) 499-7219 (V).

FOR SALE: '82 Chevy Chevette, 2-dr., 4-speed, new tires and battery, runs exc., \$500. Call (301) 552-0017 (TTY) eves., or E-mail IILBURNETT.



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Dr. Kathleen Peoples, director of Student Development (right), recognizes Mary Wells, secretary III in the Office of Multicultural Student Programs, for five years of service.